



Winter Safety Tips



The long days and nights of winter will soon be here. Now is the time to prepare for safe winter driving. Each vehicle should be winterized. This can be done by the individual at the Auto Hobby Shop or by the Base Service Station. Individuals also need to load vehicles with basic winter supplies that would be needed in the event of a breakdown or stoppage due to weather conditions. It is also good to begin thinking about and practicing defensive winter driving. Before any road trip during the winter, it is vital to check the current weather and road conditions. These can be found at the following websites: (for weather conditions) http://www.vedur.is/english/index_eng.html (for road conditions) <http://www.vegag.is/faerd/indexe.html>.

Vehicle Preparation

- ◆ Ensure your vehicle is in good mechanical condition
- ◆ Get the engine tuned up
- ◆ Be sure that winter-weight motor oil is used
- ◆ Check the battery
- ◆ Fill all fluids to appropriate levels; making sure washer fluid tank is filled with a fluid that won't freeze when the wind chill and/or temperature drops below zero
- ◆ Inspect wiper blades to ensure they are cleaning properly and consider using winter wiper blades
- ◆ Make sure that all lights on the vehicle are working correctly and are clearly visible from all directions
- ◆ Verify that the tires are in good condition, have good tread and are inflated to the correct pressure
- ◆ Studded tires are only allowed after November 1st

Basic Winter Supplies

- ◆ A properly inflated spare tire
- ◆ A lug wrench and a jack
- ◆ Reflective triangles and/or flares
- ◆ Tow chain or strap
- ◆ Tire chains
- ◆ Jumper cables
- ◆ An abrasive material (such as sand or salt)
- ◆ A snow shovel
- ◆ A window scraper, preferably with a brush on one end
- ◆ A flashlight and extra batteries
- ◆ A blanket or sleeping bag
- ◆ Extra clothing, including ski caps and mittens
- ◆ A bright piece of cloth to attach to the antenna to signal for help
- ◆ A first-aid kit
- ◆ A waterproof container with candles and matches
- ◆ Non-perishable and high-energy food

Winter Driving

- ◆ Know your vehicle – front-wheel, 4-wheel-, and rear-wheel drive vehicles all handle differently
- ◆ Clear all snow and ice from the vehicle's windows, hood, roof, and trunk
- ◆ Keep lights on low beam during poor visibility due to fog, rain, wind, or snow
- ◆ Pick a safe spot and do a low speed traction test to check out the road surface
- ◆ Stay calm and focused; slow down and increase safe driving distances
- ◆ If possible, brake or accelerate while driving in a straight line, not on a curve
- ◆ Avoid using brakes – use the vehicle's engine to slow down
- ◆ Watch for mixed road conditions, especially at intersections and bridges



Don't Block That Door!

It was noted during the recent IG inspection that exit doors were either blocked or locked during periods of occupancy. This goes against Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Standard 29 CFR 1910.36(b)(4) which states: in every building or structure exits shall be so arranged and maintained as to provide free and unobstructed egress from all parts of the building or structure at all times when it is occupied. No lock or fastening to prevent free escape from inside of any building shall be installed. This deficiency was noted in multiple locations and in one case on multiple exit doors. Blocking of exit doors can happen in a blink of an eye if shop personnel aren't aware of their surroundings and the safety guidelines. A 55-gallon drum or a pallet of materials can inadvertently be placed in such a way as to partially or fully block an exit. This could become a serious issue in the event of a fire, chemical spill, or gas leak. Workers must have free access to all exits at all times. Locks cannot and should not be placed on the outside of exits during periods of occupancy. Both supervisors and workers need to take a fresh look at their surroundings and make the proper adjustments to furniture or materials that may be blocking an exit. Don't wait for the next person to do it. Remember this simple rule: "Don't Block That Door."

Mishap Investigation – Get Down To The Root Cause

Another aspect of safety that the IG team members emphasized was identifying the root cause of a mishap and then eliminating it or at least minimizing that root cause to prevent future mishaps. An example of this would be someone slips and falls at work. Ask the question, "Why did this person fall?" If there was water on the floor, again ask the question "Why?" Possible answers would be: there was a pipe or hose leaking water, someone dropped a glass of water and didn't wipe it up, or the floor got wet when the dishes were washed. If it was a pipe or hose leaking, the solution is easy – get it fixed. If someone dropped a glass of water and didn't wipe it up, find out why. Don't accept being in a hurry for an answer. Non-compliance is a key factor in many mishaps. If the floor is getting wet when dishes are being washed, assess the dish washing process to see if any engineering modifications can be made that would help minimize or eliminate this condition. Examples of an engineering process would be to modify water pressure or sink depth. Whatever the mishap, repeatedly ask the question "why" until the root cause is identified, then find a way to eliminate or minimize it.

Hazard Reporting – Do's and Don'ts

Every now and then things work out the way they should. This happened recently when a hazard was reported to the safety office staff by an interested and caring individual of the Keflavik community. The hazard was then addressed to a Public Works shop. They, in turn, took care of the problem. All of this was well and good but the crowning achievement of this scenario was that the original person reporting the hazard let us know that the hazard was fixed and relayed a thanks to those that took care of the problem. That let us at the Safety Office know that the hazard was eliminated. We extend our thanks to all that were involved in this action, but the real emphasis of this article is to remind all base personnel to do what this caring individual did.

- ◆ Assess the environment and report perceived or real hazards.
- ◆ Take the time to report the hazard to the Safety Department. This can be done via e-mail, telephone, the Hazard Reporting Form, or in person.
- ◆ Follow-up on the hazard. If the hazard doesn't get fixed within a reasonable amount of time, contact the Safety Department again. If it has been fixed, inform us.